

IN THE CLAIMS

C 1. (Previously amended) A computer-based method, comprising comparing a plurality of vendor specific instances of an electronic print job request object within a combined view, each vendor specific instance of the print job request object to represent a relationship between a customer and one of a plurality of vendors to perform a print job project, each vendor specific instance of the print job request object defined through a series of iterative customer submissions and vendor responses to allow the customer to select one of the plurality of vendors to perform the print job project.

2. (Previously amended) The computer-based method of claim 1 wherein the customer compares the plurality of vendor specific instances of the print job request object via a web interface.

3. (Previously amended) The computer-based method of claim 1 wherein the vendor responses being based on the customer submissions and the print job.

4. (Previously amended) The computer-based method of claim 1 wherein comparing comprises incrementally adding constraints to each initially under-constrained vendor specific instance of the print job request object to produce a sufficiently-constrained vendor specific instance of the print job request object.

5. (Currently amended) A computer system configured to allow a customer and a plurality of vendors to interact with one another in defining a plurality of vendor specific instances of aan

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electronic print job request object for a print job project by permitting the customer to compare within a combined view, in an initially under-constrained fashion, each vendor specific instance of the print job request object and further permitting the vendors and the customer to successively develop each vendor specific instance of the print job request object to a fully-constrained form through an iterative process in which one or more constraints on one of the vendor specific instances of the print job request object are added, removed and/or modified during each iteration.

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6. (Currently amended) The computer system of claim 5 wherein the customer is further permitted to vary information regarding each of the vendor specific instances of the electronic print job request object on a vendor-by-vendor basis.

7. (Previously amended) The computer system of claim 5 wherein the fully-constrained form of at least one of the vendor specific instances of the electronic print job request object represents a binding contractual obligation between the customer and at least one of the plurality of vendors.

8. (Previously amended) The computer system of claim 5 wherein the customer and the vendors interact through a series of notification messages transmitted via a Web server.

9. (Previously amended) The computer system of claim 8 wherein the Web server is configured to store each vendor-specific instance of the print job request object, each accessible by the customer.

10. (Currently amended) The computer system of claim 9 wherein the Web server is further configured to provide vendor-specific views of each of the initially under-constrained print job request objects specified by the customer.

11. (Previously amended) The computer system of claim 10 wherein the Web server is further configured to provide a customer-oriented view of multiple ones of the vendor-specific instances of the print job request object upon request.

12. (Previously amended) A computer-based vendor specific instance of an electronic print job request object, comprising a set of constraints arrived at through an iterative process in which a customer and a plurality of vendors successively define criteria for completing a print job project task defined by the print job request object, the criteria including payment and delivery terms sufficient to support a binding contractual obligation.

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13. (Previously amended) The computer-based vendor specific instance of the electronic print job request object of claim 12 wherein the print job project comprises a different pricing structure for each vendor based on at least bindings, covers, and delivery schedules.

14. (Previously amended) The computer-based vendor specific instance of the print job request object of claim 12 wherein the vendor defined criteria is based on the customer defined criteria and the print job project.

15. (Currently amended) A Web server having one or more user interfaces to allow a customer and a plurality of vendors to view one or more vendor specific instances of aan

electronic print request object for a print job project within a combined view, the user interfaces configured to allow the customer and the vendors to connect with the web server permitting the customer to compare, in an initially under-constrained fashion, each vendor specific instance of the print job request object and further permitting the vendors and the customer to successively develop each request object to a fully-constrained form through an iterative process in which one or more constraints on the vendor specific instances of the print job request object are added, removed and/or modified during each iteration.

16. (Previously amended) The Web server of claim 15 wherein the customer and the vendors are permitted to add, remove and/or modify the vendor specific instances of the print job request object through the use of Web forms interacting with the web server.

C/ 17. (Previously amended) The Web server of claim 16 further comprising a notification engine configured within the web server, the notification engine to provide notification messages to the customer and the vendors, as appropriate, upon an indication that at least one of the vendor specific instances of the print job request object has been modified in some way.

18. (Previously amended) The Web server of claim 17 wherein the user interfaces further comprise one or more vendor-specific interfaces through which vendor-specific ones of the instances of the print job request object are provided to the vendors.

19. (Previously amended) The Web server of claim 18 wherein the user interfaces further comprise a customer interface through which a common customer view of one or more of the vendor-specific instances of the print job request object are provided.

20. (Previously amended) The Web server of claim 19 wherein the customer interface is configured to allow the comparison of the one or more vendor-specific instances of the request object.

21. (Previously amended) A method of comparing proposals from a plurality of vendors comprising:

defining, through a series of iterative customer submissions and vendor responses, information concerning a print job project, the information being stored in a plurality of vendor-specific instances of a print job object; and

comparing two or more vendor-specific instances of the print job object within a combined view to select one of the plurality of vendors to perform the print job project.

22. (Previously added) The method of claim 21 wherein the vendor-specific instance of the print job object of the vendor to be selected is a binding contractual obligation between the customer and the selected one of the plurality of vendors.